# CHAPTER 4.0: A REGIONAL CENTER: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

**Goals**

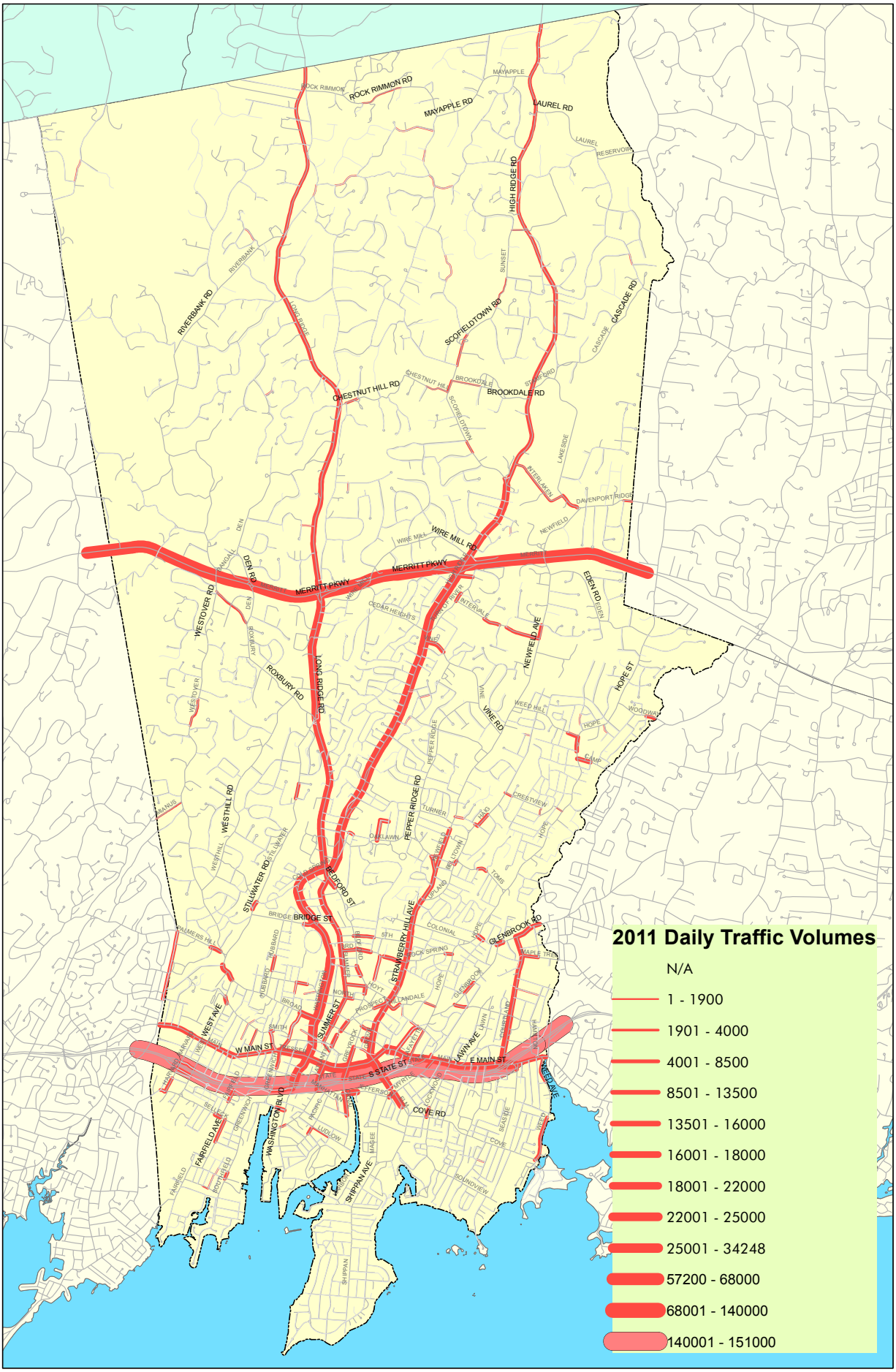
- Address regional roadway congestion and improve commuter rail
- Improve intra-city mobility for all modes (vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Promote transit-oriented development

## A. Introduction

Improving Stamford's transportation infrastructure is a critical component of the City's economic development strategy. Mitigation of traffic congestion and improvements to commuter rail are essential to sustaining and enhancing economic growth in the city. Traffic congestion on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway and system failures on Metro-North's New Haven line are compromising Stamford's ability to attract economic growth and capture regional demand for entertainment and culture. As shown in Figure 8, I-95 carries approximately 140,000 to 150,000 vehicles per day through Stamford, and the Merritt Parkway carries another 57,000 to 68,000 vehicles. The South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) projects that congestion on these roadways will continue to grow, with rush-hour traffic reaching consistently severe congestion levels from Greenwich to Westport by 2030 (see Figure 9). At the same time, continued mechanical failures and service interruptions on the New Haven line affect the reliability and performance of the City's commuter rail service. According to a report published by the Regional Plan Association (RPA), $3.6 billion in additional investment above the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (ConnDOT) current five-year capital plan is needed to bring the New Haven line into a state of good repair within 10 years.[7] Further system upgrades to reduce travel times and accommodate growth in ridership would require substantial added investment. Without these investments, Stamford's economic growth potential will be constrained by significant access restrictions.

Within the City, roadway and transit improvements and new pedestrian and bicycle connections are needed to effectively get people where they need to go and enhance Stamford's vitality as an appealing, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly city. Attractive, functional streetscapes and integrated circulation networks that serve all users are key components of the City's strategy for attracting businesses and employees and improving residential quality-of-life. High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads serve as Stamford's primary north-south access routes; east-west access is provided mainly via East and West Main Street (Route 1), which serve as key gateways to the City and will be the next phase of development in the evolution of Stamford over the next 15 years. These roadways provide critical intra-city mobility. Traffic along them presents a challenge to neighborhood quality-of-life as drivers seek alternate routes. Bus service does not provide an attractive alternative to driving along these and other routes for those with access to a car. While buses have the potential to transport more people within Stamford and thus reduce traffic congestion, as described below, the current system does not meet the needs of many residents and commuters.

[7] *Getting Back on Track, Unlocking the Full Potential of the New Haven Line,* RPA, January 2014.




STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 8: 2011 EXISTING TRAFFIC CONGESTION

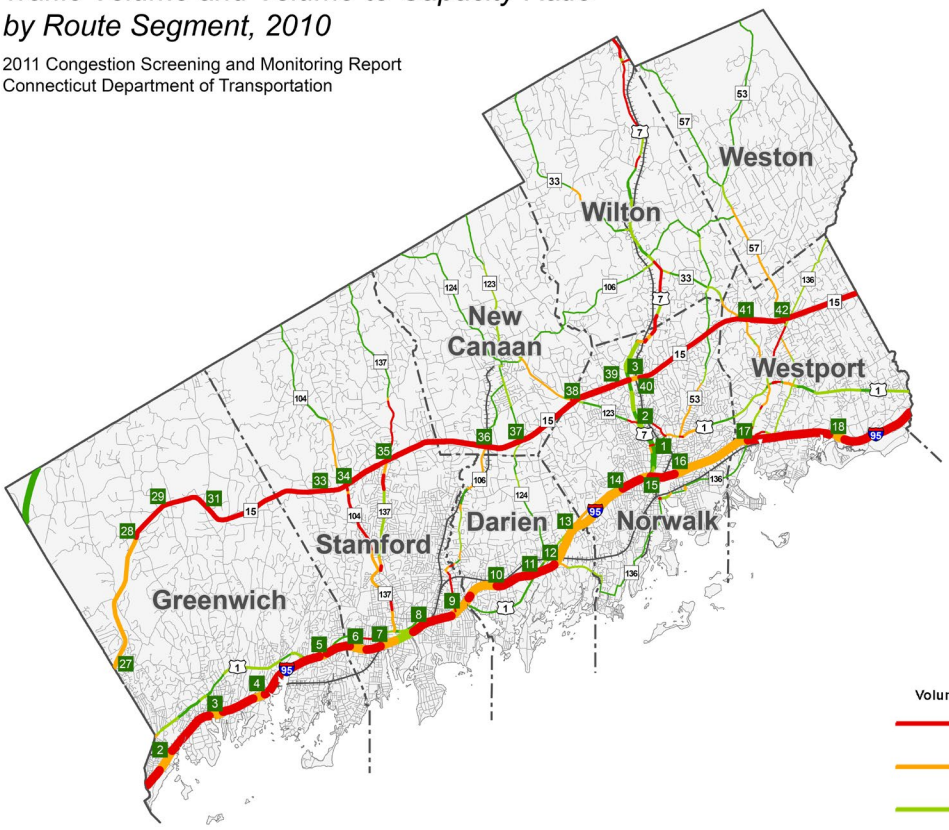
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

BFJ Planning

*Traffic Volume and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio by Route Segment, 2010*

2011 Congestion Screening and Monitoring Report
Connecticut Department of Transportation



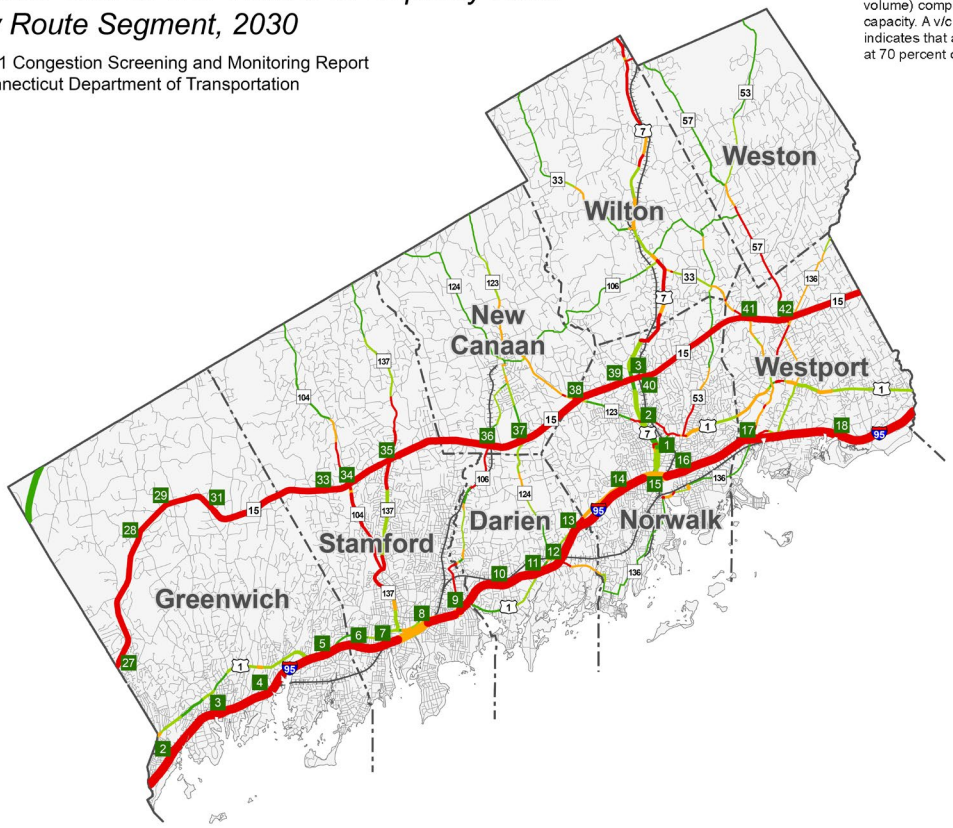

**Volume-to-Capacity Ratio**

- Severe Congestion (v/c = >1.0)
- Moderate Congestion (v/c = 0.8-1.0)
- Marginal Congestion (v/c = 0.6-0.8)
- No Congestion (v/c = <0.6)

Volume-to-Capacity Ratio is a measure of traffic demand on a facility (expressed as volume) compared to its traffic-carrying capacity. A v/c ratio of 0.7, for example, indicates that a traffic facility is operating at 70 percent of its capacity.

*Traffic Volume and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio by Route Segment, 2030*

2011 Congestion Screening and Monitoring Report
Connecticut Department of Transportation



## B. Mobility Improvements

Stamford's 2002 Master Plan recognized the critical relationship among traffic, transit and growth. A Traffic and Transit Report that accompanied the Master Plan recommended a combination of strategies to address traffic congestion and support economic development. These strategies included transportation demand management (TDM), significant transit improvements and the introduction of substantial new housing development in areas close to Downtown, specifically:

- Lowering parking ratios and increasing floor area ratios near transit
- Allowing for transfer of development rights
- Adding parking at stations east of Stamford
- Adding bus service to meet trains at the Stamford Transportation Center
- Adding train service

Since 2002, Stamford has been actively studying a range of transportation and mobility improvements including transit, pedestrian, bicycle and roadway projects. The City has created new residential development in the South End near the Stamford Transportation Center. Parking ratios for these new residences reflect reduced parking demand for housing near transit. This has been an effective strategy for mitigating the impacts of growth on traffic congestion. There are also a variety of improvements underway at the Stamford Transportation Center, including:

- Platform extensions
- New pedestrian bridge over Washington Boulevard
- Improvements to the Atlantic Street bridge, which will enhance connectivity between Downtown and the South End
- Improvements to the I-95 off-ramp at Atlantic Street to relieve congestion and conflicts
- Widening of State Street to three lanes
- Reorganization of shuttle parking and loading areas

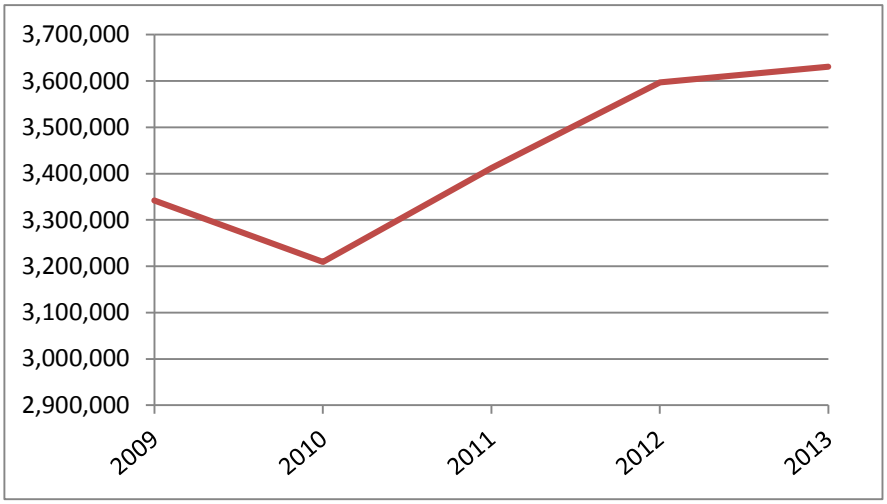
In addition, the State of Connecticut, working with a private developer, has initiated plans to create significant new commercial, residential and retail development at the Stamford Transportation Center. As proposed, the State's transit-oriented development (TOD) plan will include approximately 600,000 square feet of commercial/office space, 60,000 square feet of retail, 150 residential units and a 150-room hotel. As the State moves forward with its plan, coordination with the City will be essential to ensure that the scale of the development and proposed uses are consistent with the City's overall vision for the train station area. As expressed in the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan prepared in 2010, this area is envisioned as a lively transit hub that provides important transit connections, relates well to pedestrians and bicyclists and provides opportunities for people to live and work in close proximity to transit.

Stamford's two other train stations, which are on the New Canaan branch line, also provide important opportunities for TOD. The City is planning for two new village centers at its Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. This project, which was recommended in the 2002 Master Plan, envisions new mixed-use transit-oriented infill development in a compact area around these stations.

Buses are another important component of the City's transit system, which must be better integrated into an overall plan for enhancing transit service (see

Figure 10: Rail and Bus Routes). While bus ridership has steadily increased over the past several years, as shown in Chart 14, the bus system is designed as a traditional hub and spoke system centered on the Stamford Transportation Center, and does not meet the needs of many residents and commuters. Currently, many corporations provide private shuttle services to transport workers to and from the Stamford train station as an alternative to City bus service. Crosstown and north-south bus service is limited, requiring transfers at the transportation center, which presents a challenge for residents without cars living in neighborhoods outside Downtown such as West Side, Waterside and the East Side, and limits access from the north to amenities and public parkland in the South End. A transit project, the Urban Transitway, which has been implemented by the City, begins to address this issue. The Transitway provides a new high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane and bicycle lane linking the Stamford Transportation Center and East Main Street. Other new transit improvements being piloted in the City include a new trolley service between Downtown and the South End. If successful, this service could be expanded to include other trolley routes providing intra-neighborhood transit.

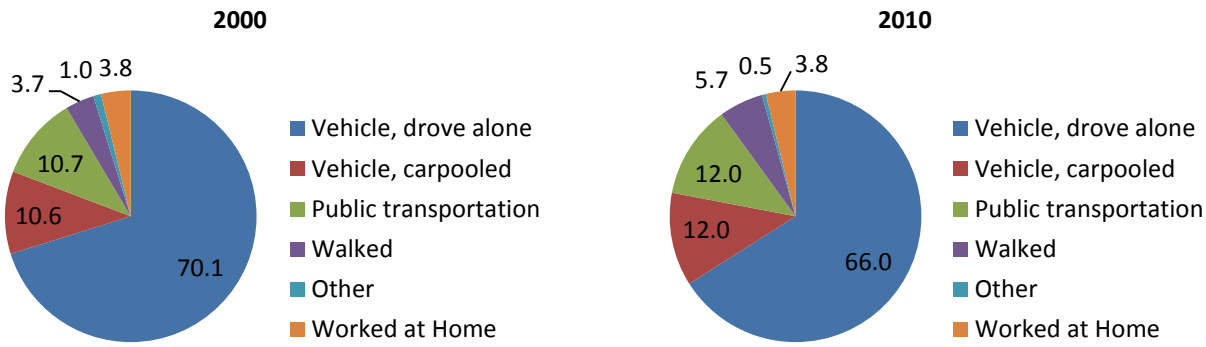
**Chart 14: Annual CT Transit Bus Ridership - Stamford Division, 2009-2013**




*Source: CT Transit*

Stamford's bicycle and pedestrian networks are key components of its transportation infrastructure. As shown in Chart 15, from 2000 to 2010, the percentage of commuters who drove alone to their jobs fell from 70.1 percent to 66 percent, while all other modes – carpooling, public transportation walking and other means – increased as a percentage of total commuters. While these bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation have traditionally been under-recognized and underutilized in the City, there is significant support for greater emphasis on cyclists and pedestrians and the role they will play in Stamford's future, especially in the Downtown, South End and train station area. These neighborhoods continue to evolve into dynamic urban spaces attracting new residents, businesses, entertainment and culture. Their ability to serve pedestrians and bicycles as well as cars will be essential to supporting the uses and activities that attract economic growth and investment.

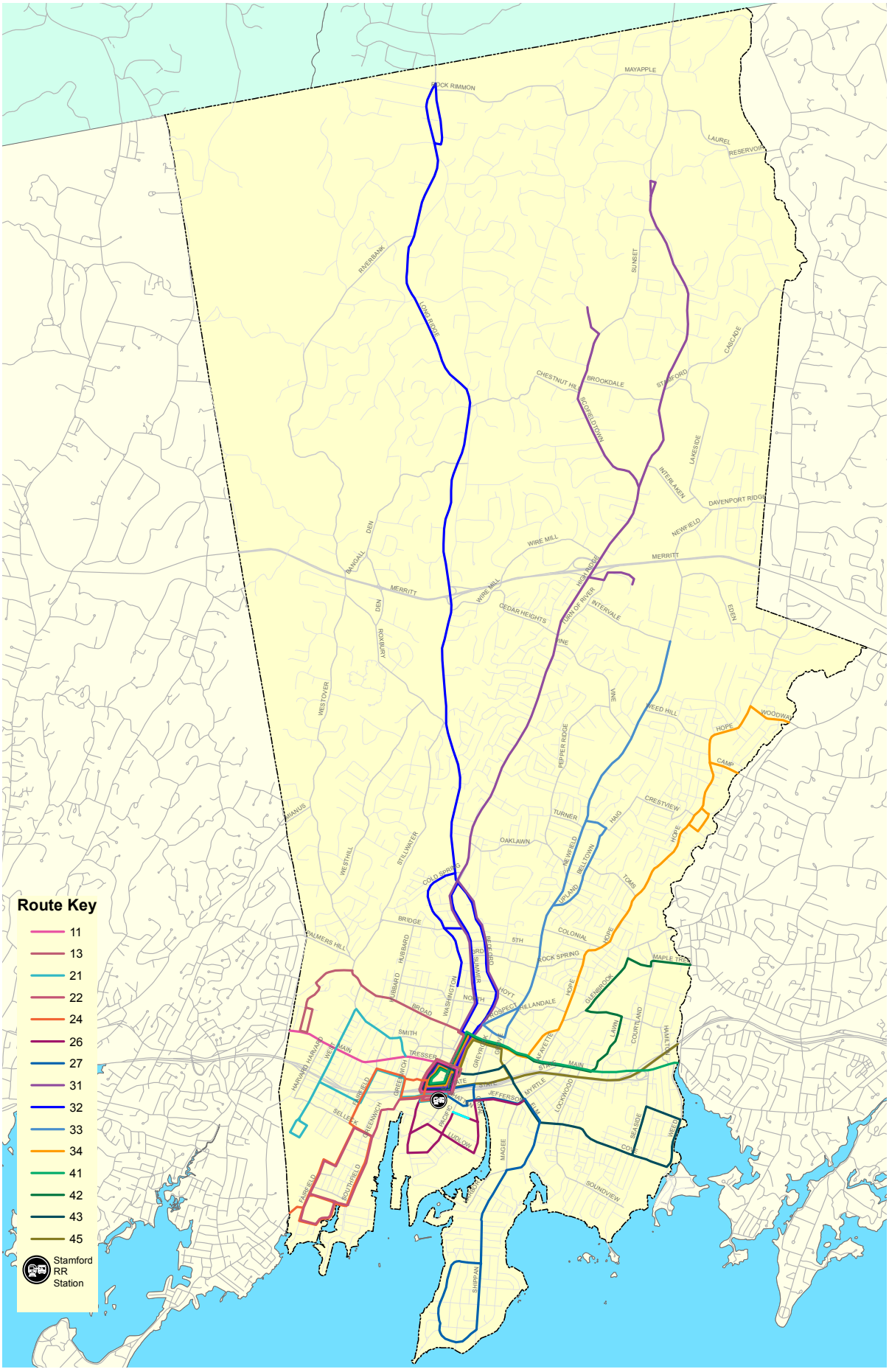
**Chart 15: Journey to Work Data, 2000 and 2010**




*Source: U.S. Census, 2000 Summary File 3 & 2010 ACS 1-Year Estimate*

Currently, there are few designated bicycle routes in the City. However, as shown in Figure 11, a significant new north-south route is planned along the Rippowam River connecting Scalzi Park to Southfield Park. In addition, the planned East Coast Greenway, a multi-state trail system intended to link the major cities of the East Coast, is proposed to pass through Stamford by utilizing the Merritt Parkway right-of-way. The Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) is studying the feasibility of constructing a multi-use trail along the parkway, as described below.

Many City sidewalks are unsafe and unwelcoming and conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles have resulted in numerous injuries, particularly in the Downtown. As shown in Figure 12, the most pedestrian/vehicular crashes have occurred at the intersection of Tresser and Washington Boulevards. Other dangerous locations include Tresser Boulevard and Atlantic Street, Broad and Atlantic Streets, and Broad and Summer Streets. Pedestrian improvements at these and other locations will be essential to increasing Downtown pedestrian traffic and supporting economic activity.



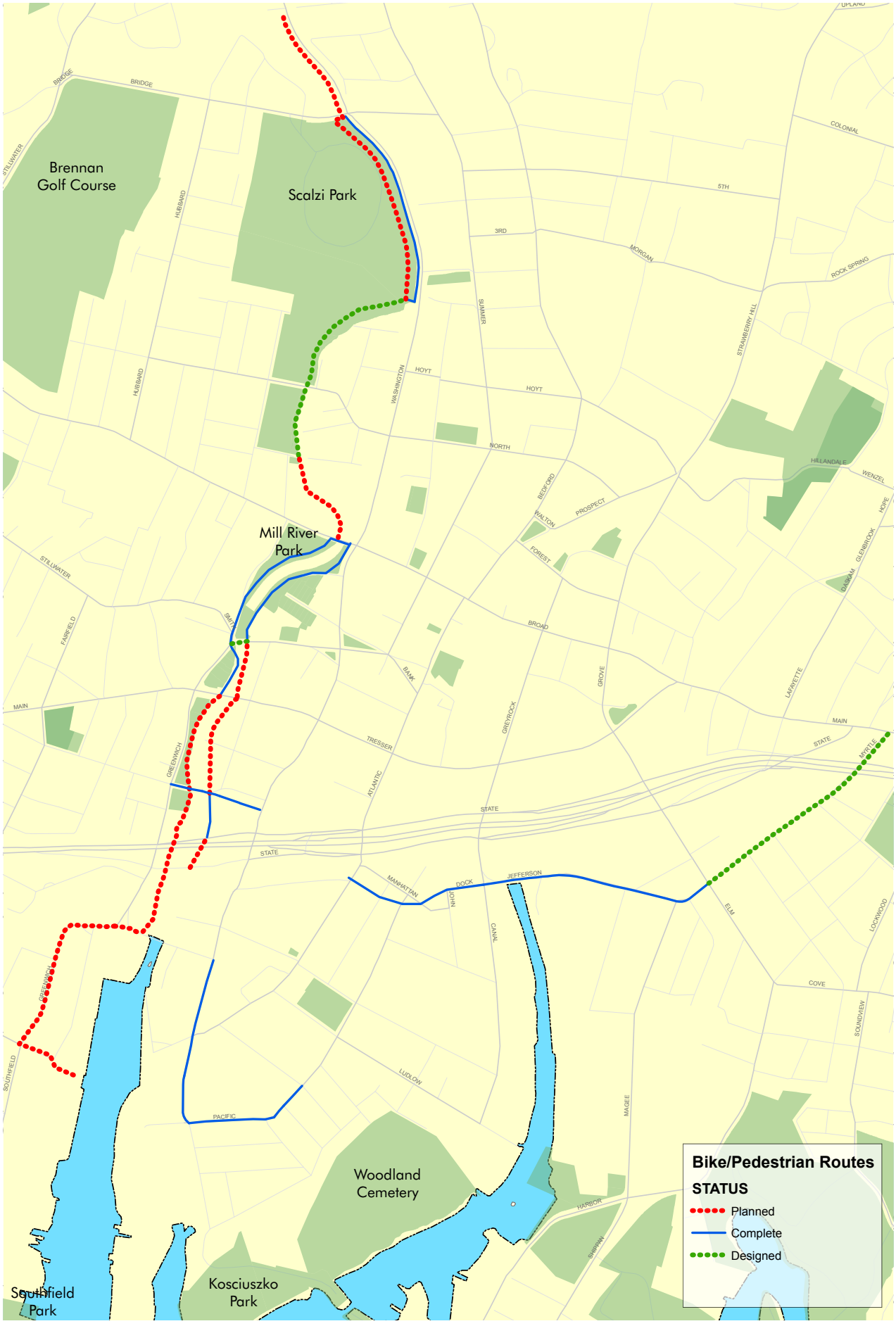

STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 10: RAIL AND BUS ROUTES



SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

BFJ Planning



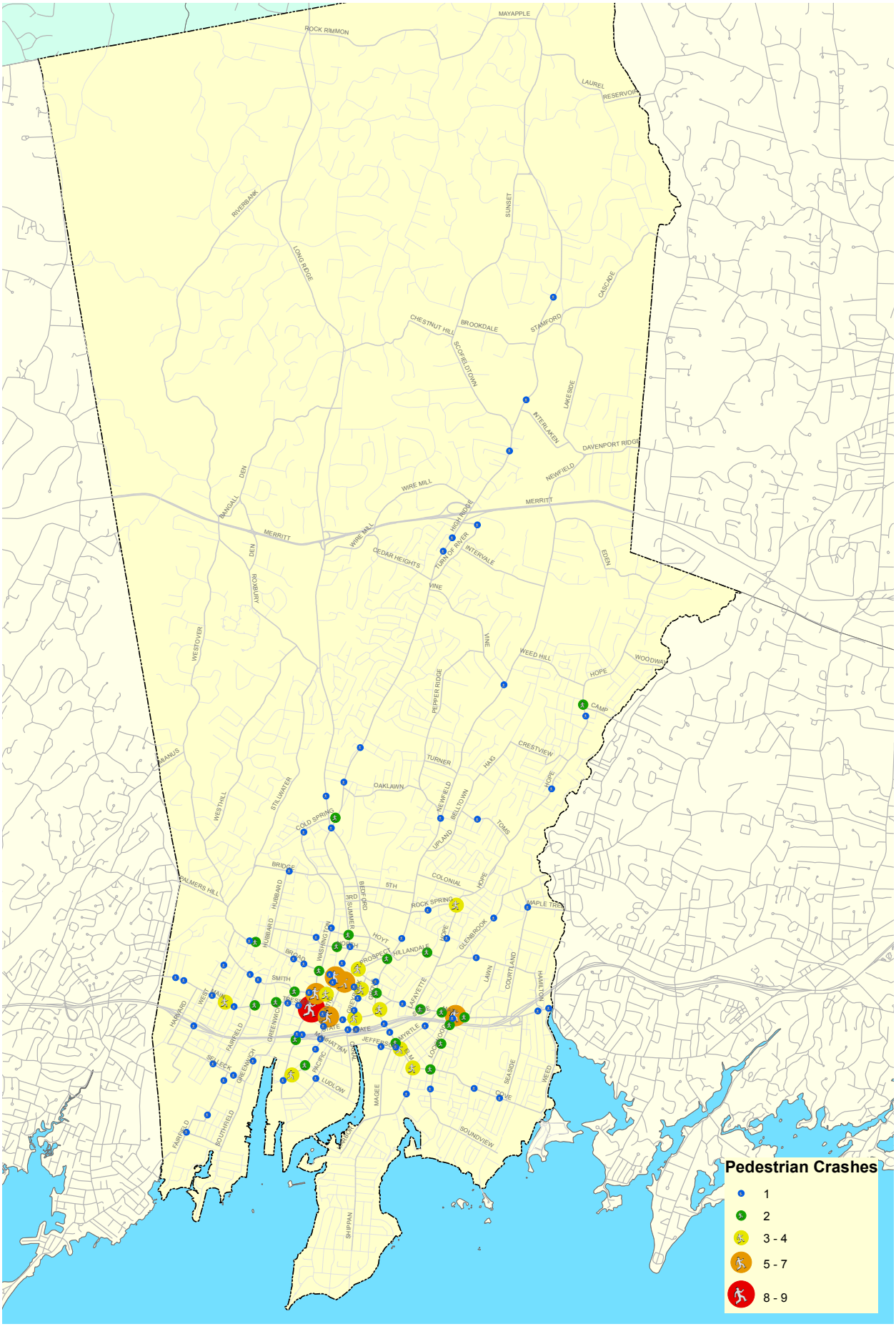

STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 11: EXISTING AND PLANNED BICYCLE ROUTES

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

BFJ Planning




STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 12:PEDESTRIAN CRASHES ON MAJOR (STATE AND COUNTY) ROADS, 2009-2011

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

BFJ Planning

## C. Transportation Studies

Since its last Master Plan was published in 2002, Stamford has conducted a number of studies on alternative ways to enhance mobility. These studies recommend a range of strategies for enhancing mobility including parking improvements, alternative modes of transit, traffic calming and roadway improvements, as summarized below.

**Stamford Downtown Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Plan, 2004**
This study reviews the location and operation of parking facilities in the Downtown and addresses pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation. The plan recommends ways to make parking more convenient, improve the pedestrian experience, improve traffic circulation and expand public parking facilities.

**Greenwich Avenue Corridor Study, 2005**
This report studies conceptual plan alternatives for improving traffic circulation and safety, pedestrian circulation and streetscapes along Greenwich Avenue between South State Street and Selleck Street, in response to community requests for improved traffic operations and safety. The alternatives recommended by the study are to:

- Provide a "one-way pair" with Greenwich Avenue serving as a one-way southbound collector roadway and Davenport Street serving as a one-way northbound collector roadway.
- Provide a modern roundabout at the intersection of Greenwich Avenue, Pulaski Street and O&G Main Drive.
- Provide geometry improvements and a new traffic signal at the intersection of Greenwich Avenue, Southfield Avenue and Selleck Street.

**Walkable Stamford, 2008**
This report describes fundamental qualities of pedestrian-friendly downtowns and provides site-specific short- and long-term recommendations for enhancing walkability in Downtown Stamford. Locations addressed include:

- Washington Boulevard: Tresser to Richmond Hill
- Stamford Gateway
- Atlantic Street: Federal to South State Street
- Washington and Tresser Boulevards
- Broad Street and Atlantic/Bedford Street

Study recommendations discuss ways to make Stamford more pedestrian-friendly, improve wayfinding, increase public amenities and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment at the Stamford Transportation Center.

**Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study, 2010**

This study, which was based on a recommendation of the 2002 Master Plan, evaluated the creation of a north-south transit corridor that would run through Downtown Stamford connecting north to the Merritt Parkway. Key travel nodes along the proposed route included Bull's Head and the Ridgeway shopping center area in the north, the UCONN Stamford, Stamford Town Center, the Stamford Transportation Center and Harbor Point in the South End. The study recommended that a priority bus corridor operated by CT Transit be initiated along the proposed route as a pilot program to test the alignment and ridership of a future fixed rail streetcar system.

**Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan, 2010**

The Stamford Transportation Center (STC) Master Plan presents an improvement plan for addressing existing STC deficiencies to enhance the capacity of the station, improve ridership and address regional highway congestion. Issues addressed in the Master Plan include physical plant deterioration, parking constraints, platform congestion and vehicle congestion. As discussed in the plan, addressing these issues will require a systematic investment program to transform the STC into a regional transportation hub with the necessary amenities, capacity, interconnectivity and iconic stature necessary to attract ridership and reinforce Stamford's position as a vital economic destination in the State and as a gateway to both New York and New England.

**Stamford Neighborhood Traffic Calming, 2011**

This report provides recommendations for minimizing speed and cut-through traffic in Stamford's residential neighborhoods. The report addresses neighborhood traffic issues on a block-by-block basis and is the result of a consensus planning process to address resident traffic and safety concerns. The analysis considered impacts of proposed traffic calming strategies on particular blocks as well as follow-on impacts such strategies would have on adjacent streets and neighborhoods. Recommended traffic calming measures include intersection treatments such as curb extensions, roundabouts, raised intersections and intersection realignments, as well as mid-block treatments, including road diets, speed tables, chicanes and median islands.

**U.S. Route 1 Greenwich-Stamford Study (SWRPA), 2011**

This study, funded by the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), is intended to develop a plan to improve traffic operations and safety on Route 1 in Greenwich and Stamford that enhances pedestrian-friendliness, manages access, minimizes congestion, accommodates transit and improves the corridor's economic potential and community character. The plan identifies locations with operational deficiencies, projects future traffic conditions and suggests a range of specific strategies to improve the safety and operation of Route 1 for all users. In Stamford, recommendations include a proposed roundabout at the West Main Street/Greenwich Avenue intersection and a realignment of Richmond Hill Avenue at the Route 1 intersection.

**Long Ridge/High Ridge Corridor Study, 2013**

Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads are Stamford's key north-south access routes, connecting Downtown and surrounding commercial areas to the City's residential neighborhoods as well as the Merritt

Parkway. These corridors were recently studied as part of the Long Ridge/High Ridge Corridor study prepared by the City of Stamford in conjunction with SWRPA and ConnDOT. The study outlines various transportation improvements for the corridors including signal timing adjustments, interactive speed signs, restriping, upgraded and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, crosswalks, medians and landscaping. The plan also provides strategies for managing land-use and growth consistent with the vision for each corridor. The study addresses multiple modes of transportation (bus, bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular) and is intended to increase overall mobility, modal choice and safety for pedestrians, residents, businesses, employees and visitors.

**Stamford East Main Street Transit Node Feasibility Study (SWRPA), 2013**

This study, funded by the SWRPA, examines opportunities to promote new transit-oriented development through the construction of an intermodal transit facility along the Urban Transitway at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. According to the study, this future transit node could include a combination of a rail station, bus station and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The Urban Transitway will create a new direct connection between the East Side and the Stamford Transportation Center, providing safe and efficient travel for automobiles, buses and bicycles. At the same time, the Transitway is the first step in a series of key milestones necessary to create a new successful transit-oriented development in the East Side. The study recommends construction of an interim bus shuttle and East Main Street bus station at the terminus of the Urban Transitway. This would establish vehicular access, bus drop-offs and parking facilities that would be needed for a potential future rail station. Additionally, an interim bus station could build the ridership necessary to support a possible new rail station along the New Canaan branch line.

**Merritt Parkway Multi-Use Trail Study (ConnDOT), In-process**

This current study seeks to determine the feasibility of constructing a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the Merritt Parkway right-of-way for an approximately 37-mile stretch from Greenwich to the Sikorsky Bridge in Stratford. The 18-month study, funded by the National Scenic Byways Program, has developed a series of conceptual treatments for various components of a trail, and presented those at public meetings throughout the study area. If the trail is determined to be feasible, a complete design effort will need to be undertaken, including rights-of-way and permitting processes, and preparation of a construction cost estimate. Construction of a trail would likely proceed in phases.

## D. Transportation and Mobility Goals and Strategies

### Introduction

Investments in roadways, regional rail and local transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian networks will be crucial to Stamford's ability to attract and manage growth over the course of the next decade. In seeking to retain corporations and expand its economic base the City must reduce and manage traffic congestion, improve regional rail and intra-City transit, increase opportunities for bicycling and enhance the pedestrian environment. The following section outlines a series of actions to improve Stamford's transportation network. Given the scope of these implementation strategies, a key recommendation of this Master Plan is for the City to establish a Transportation Department, tasked with managing all aspects of Stamford's transportation needs, including vehicular traffic flow; road improvements; bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure; parking; and enhancements to bus, shuttle and other transit. Although creation of this department is specifically addressed in Policy 4C.5, it is envisioned that its responsibilities would encompass many of the strategies listed in this chapter.

The City has set forth the following transportation and mobility goals to address these issues. Policies and implementation strategies for achieving these goals are outlined below.

- Address roadway congestion and improve commuter rail
- Improve intra-City mobility for all modes (vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Promote transit-oriented development
- Create a Transportation Department for the City of Stamford

### *Policy Recommendations*

#### Policy 4A: Improve regional transportation infrastructure

As discussed in Section 3, making it easier to get to Stamford via I-95, the Merritt Parkway and regional/commuter rail on Amtrak and Metro-North Railroad is central to economic growth in Stamford. Traffic congestion getting into and out of the City is strangling Stamford, and could limit its ability to capture economic growth. While improvements to regional transportation infrastructure are not within its direct control, the City should strongly advocate for key projects at the State and Federal level, pursuing the strategies outlined in Section 3 under Policy 3D. For example, the Merritt Parkway operates at capacity during peak hours, and its capacity cannot be easily increased because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While the historic designation presents challenges, there are targeted improvements that the City could encourage as feasible, such as intersection improvements and the addition of access and turning lanes. The most significant improvement planned at present is the configuration of the new median and guardrail design from Greenwich into Stamford.

#### Policy 4B: Upgrade the Stamford Transportation Center to serve as an attractive gateway to the City.

Stamford is second only to Grand Central Terminal as the busiest station on the New Haven line. The aesthetic and functional condition of the Stamford Transportation Center (STC), however, does not

suggest this prominent position. The transportation building itself is uninviting and does not present an image of Stamford as a preeminent regional transit hub.

***Implementation Strategy***

**4B.1: Work with the State to implement the Stamford Transportation Center Master Plan.** The STC Master Plan, published by the City in 2010 and described in 4.C, provides a comprehensive plan for addressing physical plant conditions, platform congestion, parking constraints and traffic congestion in the train station area. As the State moves forward with its plans for transit-oriented development at the Stamford station, it is imperative that the State work closely with the City to implement the STC Master Plan recommendations, including upgrading the station building and improving connections between the station and the Downtown/South End.

**Policy 4C: Improve circulation and mobility within the City.**

Improving circulation and mobility within Stamford will require a coordinated multi-modal approach that addresses roadways, transit systems, bicyclists and pedestrians. Improvements should not be made in isolation, but should consider various modes in tandem to best address congestion, safety and quality-of-life. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be considered together with decisions on roadway and transit improvements. At the same time, broader transportation demand management (TDM) strategies should be employed to reduce vehicular traffic and encourage transit use. Specific recommendations by mode are as follows:

**Policy 4C.1: Roadway Improvements**

Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads are Stamford's major north-south corridors. Other key north-south connectors include underpasses below I-95 and the train tracks at Greenwich Avenue and Atlantic, East Main, Canal and Elm Streets. East-west access is provided primarily along East and West Main Street (Route 1) and Tresser Boulevard through Downtown. The functionality and aesthetics of these roadways is central to both the City's mobility and the character of the neighborhoods they traverse.

***Implementation Strategies***

**4C.1-a: Improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic bottlenecks.** The railroad bridge underpasses at Greenwich Avenue, Atlantic Street, East Main Street, Canal Street and Elm Street should be widened to improve vehicular flow and be safer and more attractive for pedestrians. Widening of the Atlantic Street underpass is planned and funded; widening of the other underpasses should be analyzed, prioritized and implemented as well. The City should also consider implementing roundabouts as an alternative to the signalized intersections adjacent to the underpasses. Since roundabouts can improve intersection capacity without widening the approaches, bottleneck problems at these critical locations can be ameliorated without widening the underpasses, thus making this option more affordable.

At the same time, to realize the full benefits of widening the Atlantic Street underpass, traffic circulation improvements should be made along Atlantic Street. At the intersection of Atlantic and the parking garage access road, there is a two-lane southbound road segment that becomes one-lane due to a curb extension at 655 Atlantic Street. This extension should be narrowed to continue the two-lane southbound roadway configuration. This will allow two-way traffic southbound to Henry Street, where traffic can better travel east-west as well as north-south (see Figure 13).

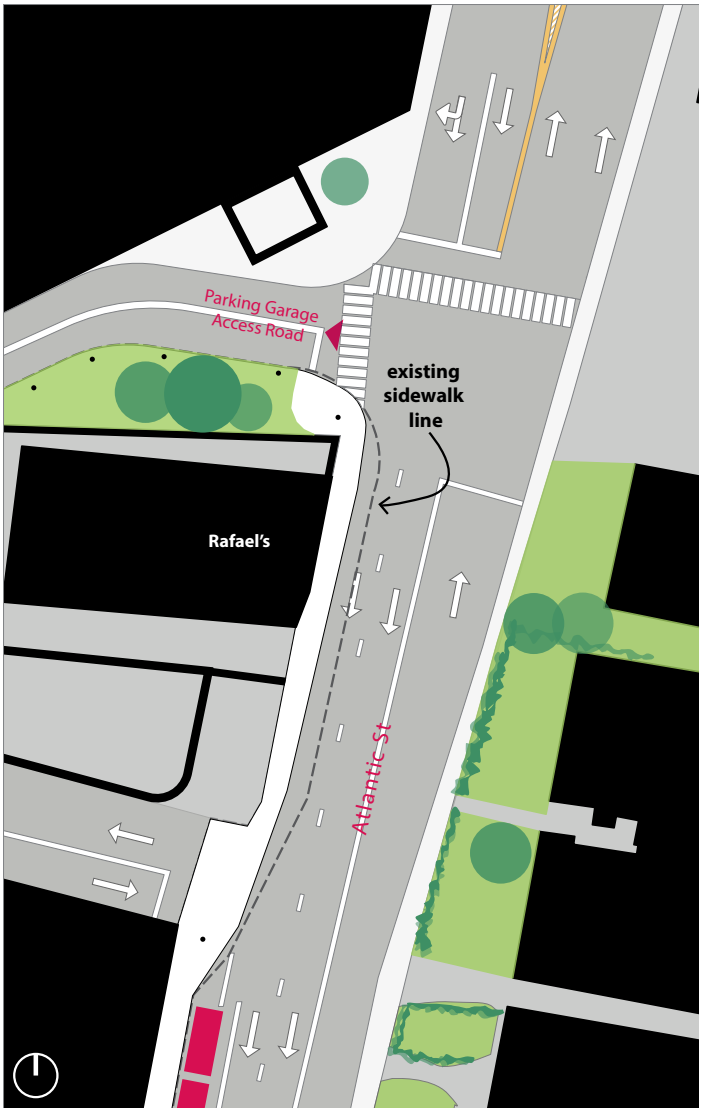
Traffic circulation improvements should also be considered for Route 1 (West Main Street) in the West Side neighborhood. The first section of Route 1 between Jackie Robinson Park and West Avenue is relatively narrow, with on-street parking on both sides and multiple curb cuts, and consequently suffers from significant peak-hour congestion. The creation of protected turn lanes at critical intersections would improve traffic flow and safety along this section. Alternative side parking strategies might also be explored for this section of Route 1. During the morning peak hour, parking could be restricted on the south side of the road for traffic heading downtown, and vice versa for the evening peak hour for traffic exiting the downtown. The most westerly section of Route 1 is wider and is a candidate for pedestrian improvements similar to those recommended for Tresser Boulevard (Figure 14), i.e. narrowing some lanes, possibly eliminating some right-turn lanes, creating medians with refuge islands for pedestrians and adding pedestrian crosswalks. The City is studying this area as part of the West Side Transportation Study. The study is considering traffic flow through the West Side and is considering design alternatives for the West Main Street Bridge, which has been closed to vehicular traffic since 2002. Alternatives being evaluated include rehabilitation of the bridge for pedestrians only, as well as designs that accommodate multiple modes. Recommendations from the SWRPA Route 1 Greenwich-Stamford Study may also be considered.

The phasing of all traffic signals needs to be monitored and adjusted on an ongoing basis to reflect changing traffic patterns in order to improve traffic flow, reduce delays and make the traffic signals more pedestrian-friendly. The phasing and cycle length of the signals are generally set to maximize capacity for vehicles during peak hours, at the cost of relatively long delays for pedestrians, bicycles and buses. Shorter cycle lengths will make circulation more convenient for these other modes.

**4C.1-b: Implement Park-and-Ride from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown.** In order to ease traffic congestion coming from the Merritt Parkway to Downtown Stamford along Long Ridge and High Ridge Roads, the City should work with ConnDOT to provide commuter park-and-ride lots and express bus service from Exit 35 on the Merritt Parkway to Downtown.

**4C.1-c: Implement the recommendations of the High Ridge/Long Ridge Roads Corridor Study.** As discussed in Section 4.C, a recent study of High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads suggests improvements along these roadways to ease traffic congestion and improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Recommendations include signal timing adjustments, interactive speed signs, restriping, upgraded and new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, crosswalks, medians and landscaping.


AERIAL VIEW




POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT: CURB EXTENSION NARROWED TO CREATE TWO-LANE SOUTHBOUND CONFIGURATION

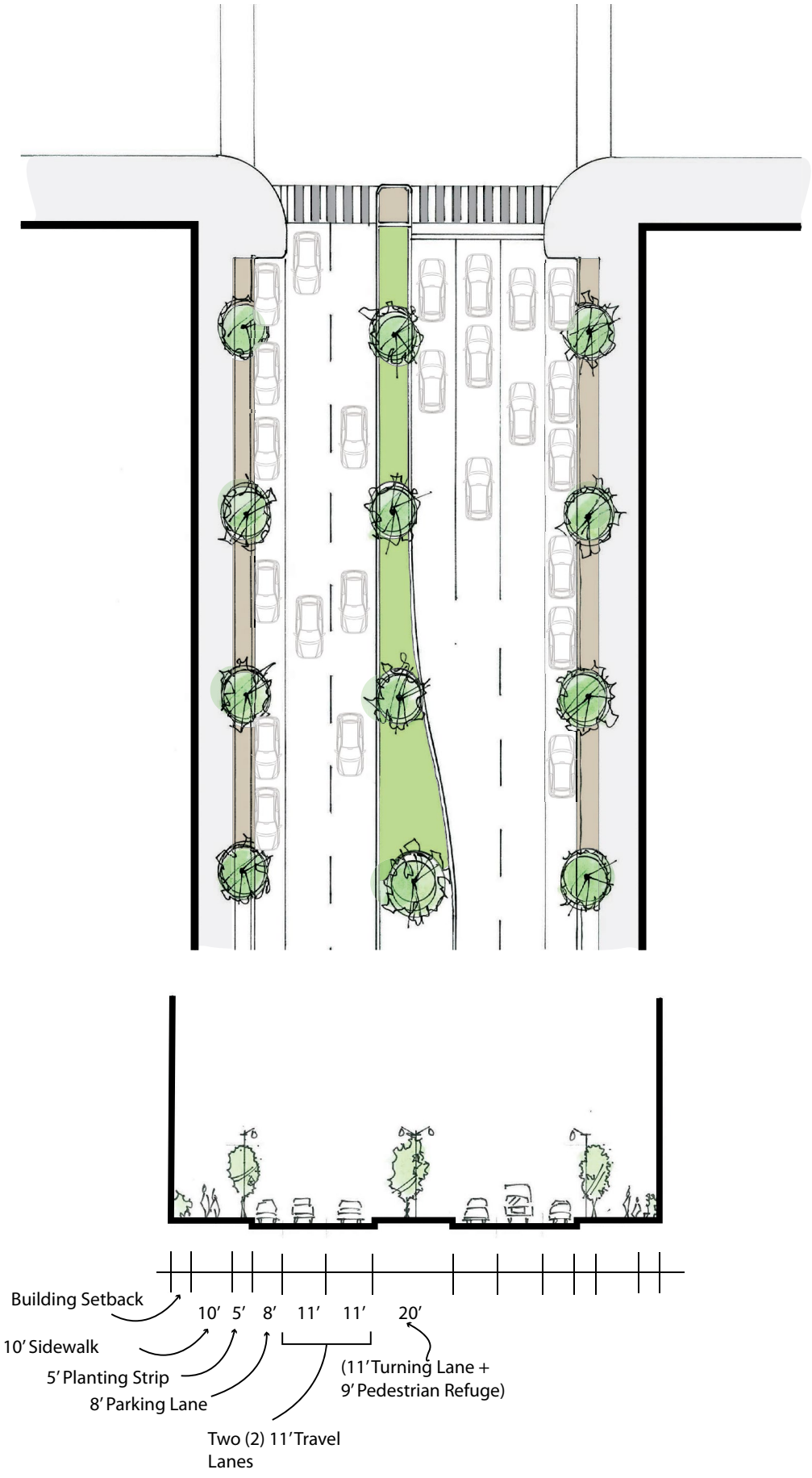





FIGURE 14: POTENTIAL TRESSER BOULEVARD IMPROVEMENTS



SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

**4C.1-d: Improve East-West connections throughout the City**. Overall traffic circulation in the City (south of the Merritt Parkway) could be improved if there were better East-West connections. Several areas within the City may be prime candidates for improved East-West circulation:

- West Stamford and its connections to Downtown
- The section between Broad Street and Bull's Head
- The section between Bull's Head and the Merritt Parkway

There are a number of east-west roads, such as Tom's Road and Oaklawn Avenue, which provide limited east-west access, but do not directly connect to each other. This is also true of Vine Road and Cedar Heights Road. It is extremely difficult to achieve these connections without land acquisition and possible condemnation. Before any consideration of these steps, a detailed traffic study examining east-west connections should be undertaken. Such a study should take a careful look at the cost/benefit ratio of these improvements.

**Policy 4C.2: Transit Improvements**

Improvements to bus, jitney and other transit services are essential to providing a viable alternative to automobile travel, expanding transportation choice and reducing traffic congestion.

***Implementation Strategies***

**4C.2-a: Improve bus service.** Efficient, reliable bus service is necessary to encourage public use. Currently, the City's bus service is not widely used by commuters coming into the Stamford train station and does not adequately address residents' cross-town travel needs. The existing spoke and hub system centered on the Stamford Transportation Center is not in line with the transit needs of many residents, commuters and visitors. Infrequent and redundant routes are offered via regular CT Transit routes; peak-only CT Transit commuter connection shuttles; the privately run, publicly accessible Harbor Point-Downtown shuttle; and numerous privately operated shuttles. These services should be coordinated to provide commuters with the best service possible. The City should work with CT Transit to make the following improvements to City bus service: 1) adjust bus routes to better meet the travel pattern needs of residents and commuters; 2) improve frequency and reliability; 3) coordinate bus departure times with train schedules; 4) explore opportunities to implement priority bus corridors to improve the efficiency of service.

**4C.2-b: Continue trolley or priority bus service connecting key travel nodes in central Stamford.** The City's 2010 *Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study* (discussed in Section 4C) recommended a new priority bus corridor operated by CT Transit connecting key travel nodes in central Stamford, including Bull's Head and the Ridgeway shopping center area in the north, UCONN Stamford, Stamford Town Center, the Stamford Transportation Center and Harbor Point in the South End. A first step toward such service is being made with a new trolleybus, which provides service between the South End and the Downtown, as shown in Figure 15). This model could potentially be expanded to provide reliable intra-City transit in and around Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Such

additional service should be complementary to existing local bus and shuttle service, and be designed to supplement, not replace, existing service.

**4G.2-c: Make transit stops more attractive and accessible.** The pedestrian environment near bus stops and rail stations should be upgraded to make walking easier, safer and more attractive. Improvements should include the provision of well-lit sidewalks, bus shelters with trash receptacles and real-time transit information at bus stops and rail platforms.

**4C.2-d: Pursue creation of a transit node at the intersection of East Main Street/Myrtle Avenue.** As discussed in Section 4.C, SWRPA prepared a study examining the feasibility of a transit node on the Urban Transitway at the intersection of East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue. A transit facility at this site, likely a bus station with parking facilities providing shuttle service to the Transportation Center, should be pursued by the City in partnership with the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG, successor agency to SWRPA as of December 1, 2014) and CT Transit.

**4C.2-e: Coordinate privately operated shuttle routes for efficiency and optimal service.** Currently, a significant number of private shuttles run routes connecting the Stamford Transportation Center with destinations throughout the City. Most of these services are restricted to building tenants and run infrequently at peak hours. Space in the shuttle area is limited and will not accommodate additional services using the space during peak hours. The City should consider requiring operators seeking to gain access to the shuttle loading area to 1) coordinate with nearby operators to combine services, and 2) allow members of the general public to use shuttles. Coordination of shuttles could allow for increased frequencies and coverage and less crowding at the STC. The shuttle area should be improved to include rider information.

**Policy 4C.3: Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Improvements**

There is significant support for making Stamford more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, enhancing mobility choice and the overall vitality of the City, particularly in Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. While it is understood that improving these modes of transportation will not have a significant impact on overall traffic, making Stamford's streetscapes more attractive and integrating its circulation networks as complete streets serving all users is an important part of the City's strategy to attract economic growth and enhance quality-of-life in Stamford. Improving the City's pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems will encourage people to walk and bicycle in Stamford, particularly in and around Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, enhancing the vibrancy of City streets. While bicycle and pedestrian improvements are not expected to substantially improve traffic congestion, they will make walking and biking an attractive alternative for getting to and from nearby destinations and benefit the character of Downtown and nearby neighborhoods.

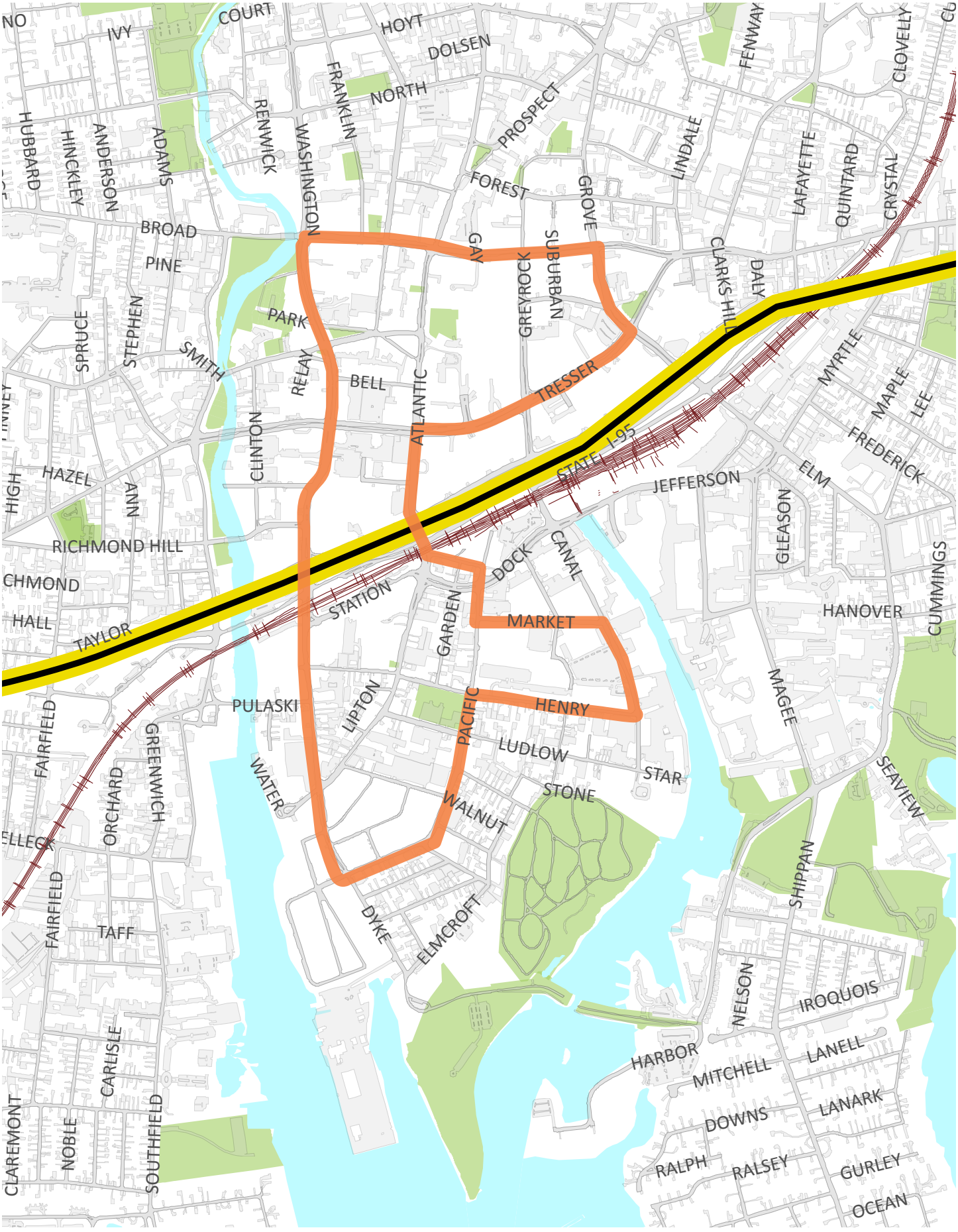



FIGURE 15: DOWNTOWN/SOUTH END TROLLEY ROUTE



SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

***Implementation Strategies***

**4C.3-a: Adopt a Complete Streets policy.** Complete Streets are streets designed to accommodate all users including vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. This is a departure from the traditional view that the singular function of a roadway is to accommodate vehicular traffic at maximum safe speed. Adopting a Complete Streets policy in Stamford means that, in its transportation projects, the City will work to accommodate the needs of all users (vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles), as appropriate depending on physical constraints. The City should pursue a Complete Streets strategy that balances vehicular circulation needs with the need for pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

**4C.3-b: Create a map of existing bicycle routes within the City.** The City should map all existing bicycle routes in Stamford, identifying gaps in bicycle route connectivity.

**4C.3-c: Implement bicycle routes in appropriate locations throughout the City.** The City should establish a comprehensive bicycle circulation system providing continuous bicycle access from its neighborhoods to and around Downtown. Various route types should be explored depending on roadway conditions and physical constraints, from simple roadway markings indicating vehicles must share the road with bicycles, to dedicated bicycle lanes, as feasible and appropriate.

**4C.3-d: Improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.** The City should work to create a continuous network of sidewalks Downtown and provide sidewalk connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. This long-term strategy should be implemented as circumstances and resources allow and should be pursued in coordination with recommendations from the City's Walkable Stamford report, which makes recommendations for enhancing walkability in and around Downtown Stamford. The City should focus resources on enhancing pedestrian connectivity with improved sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaping, street furniture and wayfinding. Pedestrian and bicycle routes should provide direct connections to key destinations.

In working to improve the pedestrian environment, the following strategies should be considered:

- Narrow vehicular travel lanes; 11-foot-wide lanes are safe in urban environments
- Introduce on-street parking where feasible
- Introduce medians that could include landscaping and refuge islands at crossings
- Eliminate exclusive right-turn lanes where they are not warranted
- Install bulb-outs at key intersection crossings where they are appropriate and will not interfere with turning movements
- Install bicycle lanes, sharrows, and "share the road" signage where possible and appropriate
- Enhance pedestrian wayfinding with attractive signage

**4C.3-e: Implement traffic calming strategies to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.**
Traffic calming improvements should be made in various locations throughout the City, as appropriate, to calm traffic in high-speed locations and improve pedestrian safety. Such improvements include the use of street trees, neck-downs at intersections, on-street parallel parking and bicycle lanes to buffer pedestrians from the roadway, stop signs, speed humps, traffic lights and signs posting speed limits.

**4C.3-e(1): Neighborhood Traffic Calming.** The City should implement the recommendations of the *Stamford Neighborhood Traffic Calming* report published in 2011 (summarized in Section 4.C), which provides strategies for minimizing speeding and cut-through traffic in Stamford's residential neighborhoods.

**4C.3-e(2): Downtown Traffic Calming.** Downtown traffic calming improvements should be consistent with the recommendations of the *Walkable Stamford* report published by the City in 2008 (see Section 4.C). Improvements along Tresser Boulevard should be prioritized, as it is the main east-west corridor through Downtown Stamford and is not a pedestrian-friendly roadway. Between Greenwich Avenue and Canal Street, the roadway includes three 10 to 12-foot travel lanes in each direction and a median that varies in width from 3 feet to 10 feet. Continuous 10-foot sidewalks are provided on both sides of Tresser Boulevard; however there is no buffer between the sidewalk area and the vehicle travel lanes. Crosswalks are striped across all signalized intersections, with crossing distances ranging from 85-95 feet. Crossing these wide intersections can be dangerous and stressful. Pedestrians often must use the narrow curbed medians at the intersections as refuge islands; these curbed medians do not extend past the crosswalk and cannot be used by the disabled or parents with strollers. Opportunities exist to re-design Tresser Boulevard as a more pedestrian-friendly roadway while maintaining its function as an arterial road serving through traffic. Given the significant number of pedestrian and vehicular crashes on Tresser, the goal of any re-design effort should be to create a safer environment for all users – drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. A range of strategies should be considered, including signal phasing and timing; exclusive pedestrian crossing phases; bicycle "sharrows" (which are roadway markings indicating that vehicles must share the road with bicyclists) and signage; bulb-outs and pedestrian refuge islands; the addition of on-street parking; and the installation of median street trees and planting strips along either side of the roadway. ConnDOT should work with the City to develop alternative design scenarios as the first step toward improving the safety and efficiency of Tresser for all users.

**Policy 4C.4: TDM Strategies**

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is an important tool aimed at lowering traffic demand during peak hours and at the most critical locations. It involves actions including land-use strategies and covers all modes of transportation. TDM policies engage the City's employers in the overall goal of allowing growth in the City while maintaining good accessibility. The Traffic and Transit Report prepared in November 2002 as part of the 2000 Master Plan outlines two sets of TDM actions: a group of actions

that can be undertaken by the Stamford employers and a second group of actions, mostly land-use strategies, which are the purview of the City. The City's TDM actions are addressed in other sections.

***Implementation Strategy***

**4C.4-a: Promote TDM Strategies to Stamford Employers.** This strategy encourages Stamford employers to adopt TDM policies that motivate their employees to travel as much as possible by public transportation or carpooling; or to travel during off-peak hours. The City should prepare a brochure explaining the benefits of TDM to employers (reduced parking demands, lower employee absenteeism, greater worker pool, etc.), and the various actions employers can take to reduce their traffic load. This brochure would be distributed to all local employers.

**Policy 4C.5: Creation of a Transportation Department.** Some of Connecticut's largest cities, such as New Haven, have a separate Parking and Traffic Management Department. The Master Plan workshops raised parking issues, particularly in the Downtown. The creation of a Transportation Department could help resolve some existing issues and create a parking management strategy. This strategy could include the relationship and cost ratios of on-street and structural parking as well as setting appropriate parking ratios for off-street parking.

**Policy 4D: Enhance Parking Efficiency**

Parking management is a key component of the overall strategy to improve circulation within Stamford, particularly in the Downtown. As discussed in Stamford's *Downtown Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Plan* published in 2004 and described in Section 4.C, better management of parking and better wayfinding signage can help to reduce unnecessary vehicular traffic created when drivers search for parking. Other effective parking strategies to consider include zoning incentives for shared and public parking, off-site parking and reduced parking ratios for development near transit.

***Implementation Strategies***

**4D.1: Prepare a parking management strategy.** The City should work with the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) to prepare a parking management strategy that gets the most out of the number of on-street parking spaces, maximizing their turnover to encourage shopping and dining, with longer-term parking in off-street lots and garages. Pricing should be set so that there are always a few available spaces. This strategy should include a comprehensive and attractive wayfinding/signage system that provides clear direction to parking facilities.

**4D.2: Continue to evaluate opportunities to reduce parking ratios for developments in close proximity to transit.** The City should continue to allow for reduced parking ratios for developments near transit and encourage shared parking at these and other locations, as appropriate. Reserving parking spaces for individual users should be discouraged so that shared-parking becomes feasible. The City should establish a system for monitoring demand for parking at such locations as projects are completed in order to fine-tune parking ratios for future projects in similar locations.

**Policy 4E: Promote Transit-Oriented Development**

Promoting transit-oriented development (TOD) is key to encouraging desired growth with minimal impact on traffic congestion. By locating new, higher-density housing as well as office and retail uses near transit, the City can encourage pedestrian-friendly development, minimize traffic impacts and relieve development pressure on lower-density neighborhoods (see Figure 16).

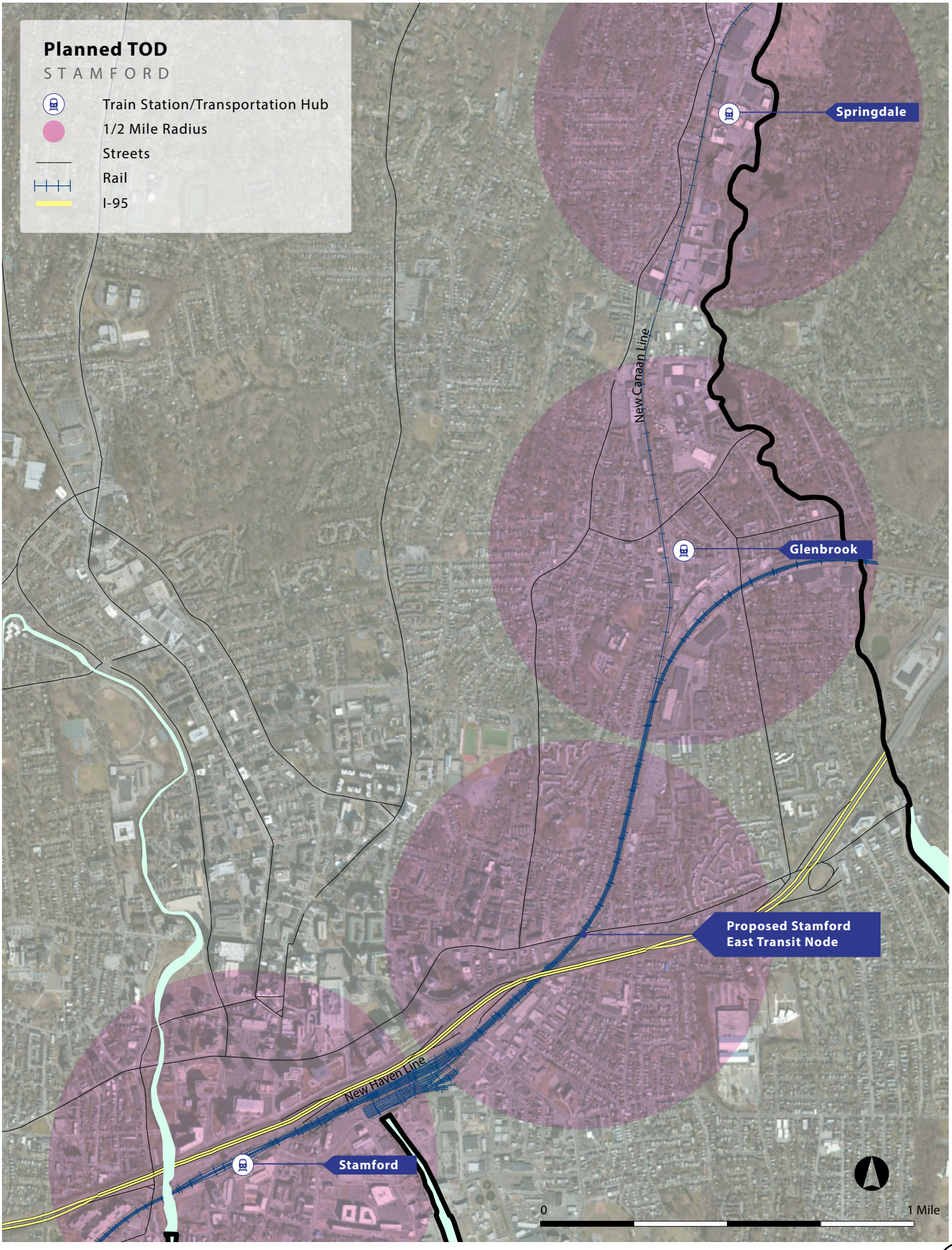
***Implementation Strategies***

**4E.1: Encourage the State to coordinate with the City on plans for TOD at the Stamford Transportation Center.** The State proposes the creation of significant new commercial, residential and retail development at the Stamford Transportation Center. This proposal is being developed behind closed doors at the State level without input from the City. As the future development of this land will have a substantial impact on the character and function of Stamford's primary gateway and affect both the Downtown and South End, the City encourages the State to reconsider its closed-door position and work in partnership with the City on the TOD plan. The City urges the State to consider the recommendations of the Stamford's 2010 STC Master Plan (see Section 4.C) and to ensure that its TOD plan provides for a pedestrian-friendly transit hub that is well-connected with nearby neighborhoods and provides appropriately scaled residential and commercial development.

**4E.2: Implement the recommendations of the Glenbrook and Springdale Village District TOD Feasibility Study.** The City is working with a consultant team and neighborhood residents to develop a plan for TOD at the Glenbrook and Springdale train stations. This project was initiated in the fall of 2013 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2014. The City should work to implement the recommendations of this report, as appropriate, upon publication.

**4E.3: Consider transit-supportive land-use policies for development near East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue.** As discussed, SWRPA recently prepared a study examining the potential for an intermodal transit facility at East Main Street and Myrtle Avenue, which could include a combination of rail station, bus station and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Zoning that would allow higher-density development together with lower parking ratios in this area could encourage development and transit use as well as reduce traffic congestion in the vicinity of the Stamford train station.

**4E.4: Consider opportunities for mixed-use transit supportive redevelopment of underutilized office parks on High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads.** As contemplated in the *Downtown Streetcar Feasibility Study* prepared in 2010 and the recently completed *Long Ridge and High Ridge Corridor Study* (2013), a north-south transit corridor with relatively express and direct priority bus service along the Ridge Roads could provide a reasonable alternative to automobile travel along the corridors, easing traffic congestion. This, in turn, could create opportunities for mixed-use transit-supportive redevelopment of underutilized office parks along the corridor.




STAMFORD MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 16: PLANNED TOD DISTRICTS



SOURCE:BFJ PLANNING

The redevelopment strategies in these two corridors need to take into consideration the fact that the Merritt Parkway operates at capacity during peak hours and that its capacity cannot easily be increased because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Replacing office buildings with mixed-use developments may therefore be appropriate, since the addition of residential uses in this corridor would internalize some traffic that otherwise would use the Merritt Parkway, and some of the traffic generated by the mixed-use developments would be in the off-peak direction and would tend to peak prior to the morning office traffic peak and after the evening office peak.